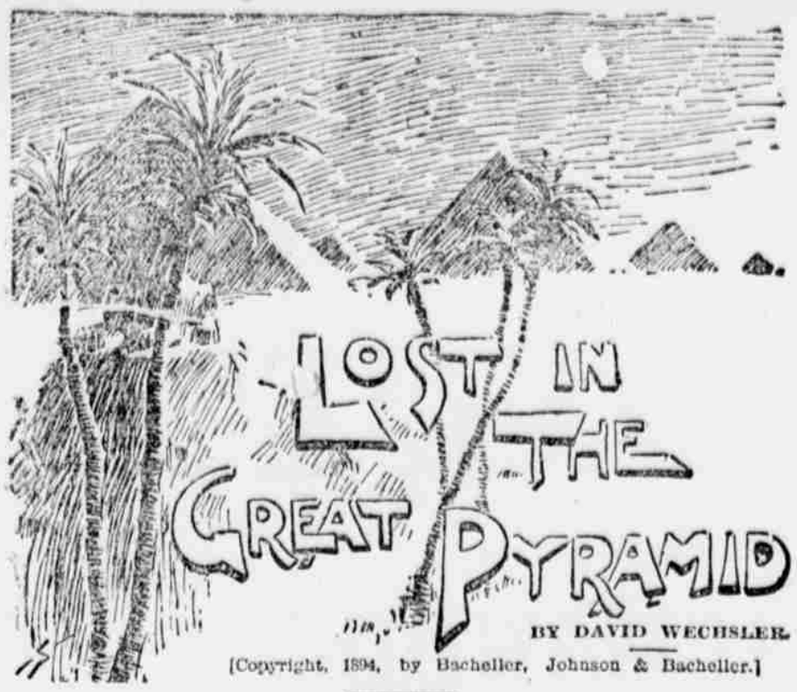

THE winter of 189— was memorable on account of many things; but to me it was chiefly remarkable for having given me my young bride. We were spending our honeymoon in the lotus-eating land, and had taken up our quarters at that admirable hostelery known as "Mena house," which stands at the foot of the plateau where the great pyramids of Gizeh are so majestically enthroned. It was in truth a halcyon time, to be marked in our memories with the whitest of stones.

One slight drawback there was certainly, but it was a mere crumple in our rose leaf. The Bedouins would never leave us alone. Wherever we went they insisted on accompanying us; it was impossible to get rid of them, but they were withal so polite and good tempered that we could not find it in our hearts to be angry. The only way to avoid the pests was to carry out our wanderings by moonlight. The Arabs believe firmly that "El-Ahram" are haunted, and will not on any account venture near the ruins after nightfall. In this way we had the whole place to ourselves but that, for us, was ample society. We revelled in our freedom, and soon became thoroughly acquainted with the entire plateau from the sphinx on the south to the dilapidated temple on the northern verge.

One lovely night, before the moon was quite full, my wife proposed a visit to the interior of the great pyramid; and having procured candles we clambered up the well-worn track leading to the entrance, and speedily made our way down the sloping shaft to the central chamber. Outside the air was slightly chilly, and the warmth of the great tomb was very agreeable, in in spite of the closeness of the air. Sitting ourselves down on the edge of the lidless sarcophagus, we began one of those conversations so dear to young lovers, during which the hours glide away like minutes, or rather when all sense of time is lost.

Our candles were burning brightly and steadily beside us, when suddenly —without the slightest warning—a gust of wind descended from above, and in the twinkling of an eye we were in darkness. The expected transition was startling to a degree. My wife clung to me convulsively, trembling in every limb, and I freely confess I too was not free from that sign of discomposure. Hurriedly I examined all my pockets, one after the other, in a vain search for my matchbox. It was not to be found! I must have dropped it somewhere en route.

This was terrible; and I was still carefully examining every receptacle I possessed, when a dull, grinding noise made itself audible through the obscurity. There is something dreadful in a noise that one cannot account for, no matter when or where one hears it. Out in the open a mysterious sound is bad enough, but situated as we were, inside a narrow, confined space amidst total darkness, it was simply appalling!

Shrinking toward each other we listened intently, not knowing what to do, for the noise, however caused, seemed to come from a direction between where we were and the door of the chamber. At last it ceased, and although half dead with a mixture of awe and terror we were obliged to muster up enough courage to try to find our way out. Gradually we crept along hand in hand, feeling the smooth surface of the wall with our disengaged hands as we went. The chamber is not spacious, but our progress was necessarily very slow, and after what appeared to be an interminable time, I actually stumbled up aganst an obstacle.

What could it be? Stooping, I tried to make out by sense of touch what it was that impeded our progress. A very slight investigation satisfied me. There could be no doubt that this barrier in our way was the sarcophagus. We must have made the entire circuit of the chamber without finding the door!

Concluding we had missed the entrance through some stupid mistake or other we set out afresh, tracing with the utmost care every inch of the polished wall. Again the distance seemed interminable, and again we accomplished the round of the accursed place, and found ourselves back at the original starting point.

It was a most astounding thing. Either the door had vanished or we were losing our senses. The silence now was terrible and the darkness was truly Egyptian—it could be felt! The heavy, close air was so thick and clammy that we could hardly breathe; our hearts were beating at railway speed and the perspiration dripped from every pore. The circumstances were, in sooth, as desperate as they were inexplicable, but since no good could come of sitting still we arose once more and recommenced our search for the vanished opening.

'Twas all in vain! The granite was as smooth and unbroken as though it had been fashioned out of one enormous block. Not a fissure or crack could be found large enough to admit even the point of a knife. Whether we tried from right to left or from left to right the result was still the same; we invariably found ourselves back at the horrible sarcophagus.

At this juncture, while we were resting in a half-dazed state against the border of the fatal sarcophagus, gradually a faint, weird light became apparent above our heads. By degrees the light grew stronger, till finally the whole chamber was filled with a pale green luminousness whereby we were enabled to distinguish each other's features.

Lost in astonishment, we, gazed around us and at each other, too deeply amazed for speech; and, as we found out afterwards, uncertain whether we were asleep or awake. The reason we had been unable to find the entrance was plain. The cyclopean mass of stone forming the lintel of the doorway had descended bodily, thus completely blocking up the passage, which it fitted with mathematical accuracy. It was from the gap thereby created on a higher level that the light was shining, the lower edge of the new aperture being about eight or nine feet above the floor of the chamber.

The opening disclosed in this wonderful manner was the commencement of a tunnel, or shaft, extending at an acute angle upwards into the body of the pyramid. It was rectangular in form, and in other respects bore a general resemblance to the passage by which we had entered, save that it seemed to be loftier.

The question now was—should we attempt to escape along this new road; or should we wait where we were, and trust to the return of the lintel to its proper place?

The light now began to fade away in the same gradual manner it had arisen, and it became painfully evident that we should be again plunged in darkness. Any fate would be preferable to the frightful sensation of being hermetically shut in amidst an intense and stifling blackness to which the darkest night outside would be the bright clearness of noon.

Taking our courage in both hands we resolved to make an attempt to escape. I seized hold of Annette round the waist, and swung her form up until she was able to scramble on to the ledge of the opening. With her assistance I had then no difficulty in climbing up myself, and as we were both pretty active we contrived to establish ourselves in the mouth of the gallery down which the pale green light was now but faintly streaming.

The sloping floor was so smooth and steep that we were obliged to crawl on our hands and knees in order to make any progress. In this way we clambered along for fully fifty yards, with much labor and weariness; slipping back every now and again, and more than once narrywly escaping a glissade into the hateful chamber. It was a fearful task! but at length we reached the top, and found that the gallery debouched at a spacious hall where everything was brilliantly illuminated in a most peculiar manner by means of appliances which for want of a better term must be called reflectors.

The whole of the upper part, or ceiling, of this marvelous room presented a most extraordinary appearance, being honeycombed—so to speak—by a vast array of hollow cones, each cone ending in a small aperture, or skylight, through which the beams of the moon, or the rays of the stars, were shining with a hundredfold their normal power. The apices of these cones must have consisted of some magnifying material, and the sides were lined with a kind of material that multiplied to an enormous extent their power of transmitting light. The entire series was so skillfully arranged that the combined pencils impinged on one spot, where there was a most singular and complicated apparatus for their reception.

In front of the mouth of the gallery stood a manifold frame, almost completely filling the opening, which, however, was scooped out on one side, thus enabling us, breathless as we were from our climb, to creep through. This frame was in truth an extraordinary structure. It was fitted with an infinite multitude of lenses and other transparent appliances, the like of which I had never seen before. I very much regret that I cannot give a better and more detailed description of this piece of work, which to my mind affords conclusive proof that the ancient Egyptians were the possessors of a long since vanished lore. The reader will shortly be able to see why it is that any account of these marvels is so vague.

Whilst I was in the act of making my way past this frame the never-to-be-forgotten grinding sound again met my ears, coming from below in the direction of the chamber we had just quitted. I at once turned and looked down, but could see nothing. The track we so painfully had traversed was now as dark as Erebus. It was manifest that our retreat was cut off; the ponderous lintel had risen to its original position.

[TO BE CONCLUDED.]

IN THE SECRET CHAMBER.

CREWS OF THE IRONCLADS.

Old Man-o'-Warsman Tells Why Americans Will Not Become Marines.

Since the formation of the new ironclad navy, there have been many complaints from the crews of the harsh treatment by the officers. To an old man-o'-warsman the nature of the complaints indicate the character of the crew, but John L. Mutter thus says on this point.

"On the 5th of last March," he says, "I finished a six-year term of service in the United States navy—all on ironclads—and, although I am a poor man, I would not try it another year for two hundred dollars a month. I believe that the inmate of a well-conducted jail ashore has a better berth.

"When one of our ironclads is loaded for sea she goes plumb down into the water, and in a head sea does not raise an inch, but wallops ahead like a mad bull. The decks are swept by a torrent from stem to stern, and except the men at the wheel and lookouts, everybody goes below, hatches are put on, electric lights glare out, and we have artificial ventilation that you can taste; there is no varied, wholesome work to pass away the time and you get weary of life.

"This is the cause of desertion. Men will risk their lives to quit the ship, leaving two years' pay behind. There is no remedy for this. In my opinion, nothing that the government can do will ever make their big hulls fit for human beings to live in, and this is the prime cause of the complaints made by the crew. The grub is first rate.

"You have a hundred privileges that were undreamed of in the old service, and if you are ill-treated it is generally because you deserve it. But the fact is, men get irritable under the constant drill and horrible monotony, and break the rules to get into trouble for a change.

"Moreover, the officers, especially the younger ones, are fidgety and restless. I believe the constant cramming they undergo makes them irritable, and they take it out of the men by hazing and meddling in matters that old-timers would take care not to see.

"As for the crews themselves, they naturally get worse every year. A young American of good sense and character can see no inducement in a service that gives him one-fifth the pay he can get ashore. He can learn as much seamanship on the Erie canal and be his own master.

"As to the fighting capacity of our new ships, no one can speak with certainty, as they have not been tried. I know that most of the older officers believe that smaller, lighter vessels will eventually take the place of these big rolling tanks. One thing is very certain, all the science and machinery afloat can not do away with the necessity for having good crews."—Philadelphia Times.

OUR COUNTRY HOSTS.

What They Think of Our Little Fads and Fancies.

A young friend of mine overhead this conversation between the proprietress of a country farmhouse and her help the other morning:

"Manda, have you rung that second bell?"

"Yes, indeed; but I never see such people! Eight o'clock breakfast! Who ever heerd o' such a thing! Why, I'm pretty near ready for dinner now."

"Oh, them folks dunno anything 'bout time. I can't see how they do it. Six o'clock breakfast is late enough for anyone.

"There's that Mr. Craig, goes in his room an' writes three hours a day, an' calls that work."

"Why, Eben'd saw a cord o' wood in that time!"

Eben would probably get fifty cents for his labor, while Mr. Craig, who is a well-known magazine contributor, earns twenty-five dollars. But let that pass.

"Manda, if that Miss Clark asks for any more stale bread, you just tell her there ain't any. I want what I've got for the flapjacks.

"My gracious, if nice, hot biscuits ain't good enough for them, then I'd like to know!

"An' that flimsy Mrs. Hall askin' if I mixed my biscuit with a spoon!

"Well, if her conscience is as clean as my hands are, then it's a mighty good thing for her.

"Here they come! Look out for that pork steak, Manda, an' see that it don't burn."—Philadelphia Times.

Mammy's Explanation.

The statue of Lincoln down in front of the city hall is always a favorite object of interest to the colored people of the community, and the other day, when a party of country cousins were visiting their city relatives, one of the first sights to be shown was "Massa Linkum." As the little row of piccaninies gazed at the countenance of their emancipator, with its prominent cheekbones and well-defined jaw bone, one of them plucked hold of his mammy's dress and said:

"Say, mammy, who is dat?"

"Dat's President Linkum, what made you a free man 'fore you was bawn,' answered mammy.

"But, mammy, he looks so po'; what make him look so po'?" continued her aspiring son.

"Sho', child, 'cause he bin dade so long," and the sightseers went over into the park to eat their luncheon.—Washington Star.

HOME HINTS AND HELPS.

—Oswego Cake: Quarter of a pound of corn-flour, two ounces of butter, two ounces of fine sugar, and one teaspoonful of baking powder. Beat sugar and butter to a cream, and add two eggs, then flour and powder. Bake in shallow tin (buttered) in a moderate oven. —Leed's Mercury.

—Aurora Ice: Beat in a mortar a half pound of sweet and half an ounce of bitter almonds; mix the same with a quart of water and strain through a cloth. Make a sirup of a pound of sugar and boil pretty high; mix with almond water and boil until clear. Add the yolks of four well-beaten eggs and stir gently until thoroughly mixed. When cold, freeze.—Harper's Bazar.

—Custard Ice Cream: One quart of milk, yolks of six eggs, one cup of sugar, one pint of cream, one teaspoonful of flavoring. Make a boiled custard with milk, sugar and eggs; strain, and when cold add cream and sugar, if desired, together with the flavoring. Beat the whites of the eggs and add just before freezing. If the cream is to be molded, add one tablespoonful of gelatine that has been soaked one hour in one-half cup of cold milk reserved from rule.—Boston Budget.

—Doughnuts Without Baking Powder: Two-thirds sour milk, one-third cup cold water, four tablespoonfuls thick sour cream, two eggs, one level teaspoonful saleratus, and one cupful granulated sugar. Flour to roll. Beat the eggs very light, adding a pinch of salt. Add sugar, then cream, and last the milk and water. Stir all together before adding the flour, in which the saleratus has been well mixed. Roll quite thin, and cut as crullers or twisted doughnuts. — E. Mary, in Orange Judd Farmer.

—Chocolate Bavarian Cream: A refreshing dessert for a hot day is Bavarian cream with choclate, and its manufacture is quite simple. Boil together a pint of cream or rich milk and two tablespoonfuls of sugar; when nearly cool, flavor with vanilla, and add the yolks of four eggs well beaten and two sticks of chocolate which have been dissolved in a little hot water. When it has become quite cold stir in pint of cream which has been whipped to a stiff froth. Put in a mold and set on the ice until wanted.—Housekeeper.

—Chopped Salad: Mix four quarts of chopped cabbage, two quarts of chopped green tomatoes, one pint of chopped green peppers, from which the seeds have been removed, and one quart of chopped onions. Drain carefully. Take four tablespoonfuls of mixed mustard, two tablespoonfuls of ground ginger, one tablespoonful of ground cloves, two tablespoonfuls of salt, two ounces of turmeric and two pounds of brown sugar. Mix smooth with three pints of vinegar. Put three pints of vinegar into a granite kettle, add the mixed spices and one ounce of whole celery seed. Put in the vegetables and boil slowly for twenty minutes. Seal in fruit cans.—Rural New Yorker.

BITS OF ETIQUETTE.

A Few Points on Correct Behavior in Varied Places and at Varied Times.

An invitation to a garden party requires an after call, whether the person invited attends or not. The call should be made inside a month. A small informal at home does not require an after call, but a large and formal affair does.

For an afternoon wedding in the fall a simple menu would be bouillon or consomme in cups, cold salmon with mayonnaise dressing, thin buttered sandwiches, creamed sweetbreads, chicken croquettes and salad, cake, ices, fruits, coffee, punch.

At an afternoon summer wedding the groom should wear a black frock coat, light trousers, black cloth or white duck waistcoat and white tie. A Tuxedo coat is supposed to be worn in the evening at home, or in making informal calls, and in the summer and otherwise only on occasions when ladies are not present. At the theater, unless ladies are of the party, a Tuxedo coat is proper.

At the reception at the bride's house after the wedding, the maid of honor stands by the bride and helps receive, even though she is but a young school girl, not yet out. The bride's parents also stand in the line. The parents of the groom, however, do not receive. They stand in some conspicuous place where they can be seen and congratulated by the guests, or if they are strangers they are introduced by the bride's family.—Philadelphia Times.

Fall Hat Models.

Charming hats, built of gold embroidery on the Hungarian style, were shown to me; they are parted in front over the brow in two delicate points, with a brim of zibeline, Persian lambs, or dormouse, and above gracefully inclined to one side was a tuft of gently-curved black or colored feathers. Fruits and feathers will be plentifully used in millinery during the next season; so also will be fur and laces, although complete satin hats will be worn as well, both embroidered and lightly ornamented with paillettes—in Directoire style, united in large bows either in front or on the side. Another handsome hat, with a somewhat boat-shaped brim, consists of purple velvet with a mammoth loop or broad lavender glace taffeta in front, while a mass of white and yellow roses is located behind, en couronne, and raising the brim.—St. Louis Republic.